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Appl. No. 09/920,756
Amdt. dated April 10, 2007
Reply to Office Action of 01/12/2007

Remarks

The present amendment responds to the Official Action dated January 12, 2007. The Official Action rejected claims 1-11 and 17-23 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) based on Paul U.S. Patent No. 6,687,817 ("Paul") in view of Williams U.S. Patent No. 5,945,988 ("Williams"). This ground of rejection is addressed below. Claims 1, 4-6, 17, 18, 20, and 22 have been amended to be more clear and distinct. Claims 12-16 have been previously canceled without prejudice. Claims 1-11 and 17-23 are presently pending.

The Art Rejections

All of the present rejections are based on Paul in view of Williams. As addressed in greater detail below, Paul and Williams do not support the Official Action's reading of them and the rejections based thereupon should be reconsidered and withdrawn. Further, the Applicant does not acquiesce in the analysis of Paul and Williams made by the Official Action and respectfully traverses the Official Action's analysis underlying its rejections.

The Official Action rejected claims 1-11 and 17-23 as unpatentable over Paul in view of Williams. In light of the present amendments to claims 1, 4-6, 17, 18, 20, and 22, this ground of rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1, as amended, addresses conducting an automated search for and retrieval of computer system-specific configuration settings by the terminal. The automated search and retrieval comprises determining if first computer system-specific configuration settings are stored

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on an attached storage device accessible by the terminal through a direct connection between the terminal and the attached storage device.

These limitations in the claimed combination are not taught and are not made obvious by Paul, Williams, or a combination thereof. Paul teaches a system for providing configuration information to a device newly joining a network. Upon its addition to a network, a new device multicasts a configuration request over the network. The request may be acted on by any device that may be listening for such a request. The device receiving the configuration request sends a configuration pending message to the device sending the request. The device sending the request then enters a listening state and the device receiving the request sends configuration data through a multicast. The device sending the request does not make any determination as to where and whether configuration information is available, but simply issues a request upon joining the network. In addition, the request for configuration is transmitted over the network, and Paul does not teach or make obvious determining if configuration settings are available in a storage device directly accessible to the device joining the network through a direct connection between the device joining the network and the attached storage device. Paul requests and delivers configuration data only over a network, and does not address the possibility of delivering configuration settings through a direct connection. Determining if configuration settings are stored in a directly accessible attached storage device provides a convenient mechanism for delivery of configuration settings in cases in which such a device is available and a network connection is not available or is not desired.

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Williams does not cure Paul's deficiencies as a reference with respect to claim 1.

Williams teaches a system allowing configuration of a home entertainment system according to user preferences, but does not teach and does not make obvious the automated search and retrieval of configuration information by a computer system. Claim 1, as amended, therefore defines over the cited art and should be allowed. Independent claims 4, 6, 17, 18, and 22, similarly address determination by a terminal as to the availability and location of computer system-specific configuration settings from a storage device accessible in the absence of a network connection. These claims also therefore define over the cited art and should be allowed.

Claims 5 and 20 address determining if a network connection is available and searching for configuration settings over a network if a network connection is available. Paul does not teach or make obvious determining if a network connection is available, because Paul comes into use only upon connection of a device to a network, so that the issue of whether a network is available does not arise. In addition, claims 5 and 20 address determining if configuration settings are available for retrieval from a specifically identified storage device through the network. Paul does not teach determining if configuration settings are available for retrieval from a specifically identified storage device, but instead teaches requesting configuration settings through a multicast, so that any appropriate device may deliver configuration settings.

Determining if configuration settings are available from a specifically identified storage device, for example, the server 38 of the present specification, simplifies the process of locating configuration settings and increases convenience in situations in which a single source is used for delivery of configuration settings to a particular terminal over a network. Williams, as noted

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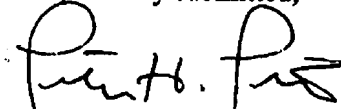
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above, does not teach and does not make obvious the automated search and retrieval of configuration information by a computer system. Claims 5 and 20 therefore define over the cited art and should be allowed.

Conclusion

All of the presently pending claims, as amended, appearing to define over the applied references, withdrawal of the present rejection and prompt allowance are requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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